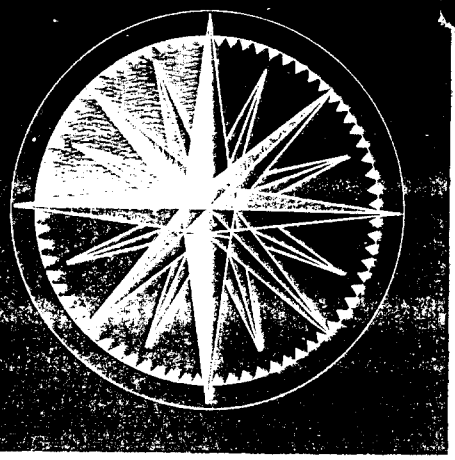
TOP SECRET



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ARMY OVERTHROWS NKRUMAH REGIME IN GHANA 17
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ARMY OVERTHROWS NKRUMAH REGIME IN GHANA

Ghanaian Army and police officers long opposed to President Nkrumah took advantage of his absence on a trip to Asian Communist capitals to end his radical regime on 24 February. His dismissal was announced by Colonel Kotoka, commander of one of the army's two brigades. Ghana's only political party has been disbanded, and other offices and

institutions abolished, including the cabinet and parliament.

Most of the military--particularly in the capital area--appear to be supporting the coup, including Colonel Ocran, commander of the other brigade. Kotoka's forces claim to have obtained the surrender of the principal element of the presidential guard, a select unit partially equipped and trained by the Soviets. The top army officer, Chief of Defense Staff Aferi, is in Addis Ababa on OAU matters. Nothing has been heard from chief of staff Barwah. The air force and navy commanders were arrested at once, probably for vacillating, and General Hassan, the military intelligence chief believed loyal to Nkrumah, has also been detained.

The initial outlines of the new regime are beginning to take shape. The coup leaders have recalled General Ankrah--dismissed as deputy defense staff chief by Nkrumah for suspected disloyalty last summer--and have named him commander of the armed forces. They seem generally inclined toward a more moderate regime which will at least be appreciably less hostile to the West than Nkrumah's.

Nkrumah apparently was still unaware of the coup when he arrived in Peking on a flight from Rangoon. He is unlikely to try to return to Ghana immediately in a bid to reverse the coup, but he will surely plot a comeback from wherever he lights.

[redacted]